

FAUX PAINTING MARKING TOOL AND METHOD

Field of the Invention

The invention relates to tools and methods for use in applying decorative finishes to
5 surfaces, and more particularly to a tool and method for marking repetitive geometric
patterns on a substantially vertical surface such as a wall.

Background

Interior walls and surfaces in homes, places of business, and public buildings are
10 commonly painted or wallpapered to provide the surfaces with an attractive appearance. In
recent years, it has become increasingly popular to apply so-called “faux finishes” to interior
surfaces to provide the surfaces with unique appearances that are more interesting and
attractive than conventionally painted or wallpapered surfaces. Faux finishes can involve
sequenced applications of paints and glazes that yield surfaces having unique combinations
15 of simulated textures, patterns, and/or colorations. Often it is desirable in a faux finish to
include a series of spaced stripes or other repetitive geometric patterns. For example, it is
possible to create a faux finish that simulates the appearance of brick or stone masonry or a
tiled surface.

In order to apply a faux finish that incorporates a repetitive geometric pattern on a
20 substantially vertical surface such as a wall, the repetitive geometric pattern must first be
marked on the unfinished or partially finished surface. Typically, a person must
painstakingly measure and individually mark each line or other geometric element by hand
using conventional tools such as tape measures, yardsticks and other straightedges,

conventional levels or plumb rules, and the like. This process can be very time consuming and often is prone to error.

Therefore, there is a need for a tool that simplifies the marking of a desired repeating geometric pattern on a substantially vertical surface such as an interior wall to simplify the
5 faux painting process.

Summary

An embodiment of the invention includes a tool for marking a repetitive geometric pattern on a substantially vertical surface. The tool includes a substantially transparent plate
10 including an outer face, an inner face, and outer edges forming a polygonal outer shape. The outer shape comprises at least a portion of the repetitive geometric pattern. A handle is attached to the plate. At least one level is attached to the plate such that the plate is in a preferred orientation for marking at least a portion of the geometric pattern on the substantially vertical surface when the level indicates the plate is in a substantially level
15 position. The tool may also include a plurality of marking pads for marking critical points in the pattern on a substantially vertical surface such as a wall.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of a tool according to the
20 invention;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the tool of Figure 1 showing the inner face of the tool;

Figure 3 illustrates a method for marking a series of spaced vertical stripes on a substantially vertical surface using the tool of Figures 1 and 2;

Figure 4 illustrates a method for marking a series of spaced horizontal stripes on a substantially vertical surface using the tool of Figures 1 and 2;

Figure 5 illustrates an alternate method of marking a series of vertical stripes on a substantially vertical surface;

5 Figure 6 is a perspective view a tool for marking a repetitive block pattern on a substantially vertical surface;

Figure 7 illustrates a method for using the tool of Figures 6 to mark a repetitive block pattern on a substantially vertical surface;

10 Figure 8 is a perspective view of a tool for use in marking a repeating diamond pattern on a substantially vertical surface;

Figure 9 illustrates a method for using the tool of Figure 9 to mark a repeating diamond pattern on a substantially vertical surface; and

15 Figures 10a and 10b are elevation and end views of an alternate embodiment of the tool of Figure 8 for use in marking either a full or a half-diamond pattern on a substantially vertical surface.

Detailed Description

20 One embodiment 10 of a tool according to the invention is shown in Figure 1. The tool 10 includes a substantially planar panel or plate 12 having a polygonal outer shape. In this embodiment 10, the plate 12 has a rectangular outer shape comprising side edges 14 and end edges 15. In one embodiment, the plate 12 has a width of about six inches, and a length of about twenty-four inches. The plate 12 may be constructed of a substantially transparent material such as a substantially transparent plastic. The edges of the plate 12 may be beveled

as shown. At least some of the edges 14, 15 may include graduated measurement markings 11 as shown. A handle 16 is attached to the outer face 19 of the plate 12. In the embodiment shown, the handle 16 is a substantially round knob that is sized and configured to be gripped in the palm of a person's hand. The handle 16 may have any shape that is suitable for gripping in a person's hand or fingers. For example, the handle 16 may include a series of grooves or contours that cause the handle 16 to closely conform to a person's hand and/or fingers.

At least one level indicator 17 is provided on the tool 10. In the illustrated embodiment, the level indicator 17 is a spirit level. The level 17 is positioned on the tool 10 such that the outer shape of the plate 12 is in a preferred rotational orientation when the level 17 indicates that the tool is level. In the embodiment shown, a bubble inside the spirit level 17 is centered in the level 17 when the side edges 14 are substantially vertical. The tool 10 may also include a second level indicator 18 for indicating a second preferred orientation of the tool 10. In the embodiment shown, the second level 18 is a spirit level that is substantially perpendicular to the first level 17. Accordingly, the level 18 indicates that the tool is level and in a second preferred orientation when the side edges 14 are substantially horizontal.

Figure 2 shows the opposite or inner face 21 of tool 10. At least the outermost portions of the inner face 21 are substantially planar. In the embodiment shown, the inner face 21 includes a substantially planar edge portion 20 and a concave or recessed interior portion 22. Marking pads 24 may be affixed to the edge portion 20 proximate to the corners of the polygon-shaped plate 12. The marking pads 24 may comprise foam or felt material or any other material that is capable of at least temporarily receiving, retaining, and transferring a marking material such as paint, ink, or chalk. A marking material such as chalk or paint

can be transferred by contact from the marking pads 24 to a receiving surface, thereby at least temporarily marking the receiving surface with spots of chalk or paint at the points of contact with the pads 24.

Figure 3 illustrates a method of using the tool 10 shown in Figures 1 and 2 to mark a substantially vertical surface 30 such as a wall with a series of spaced vertical stripes. In a first method of marking, chalk, paint, or another suitable marking material is applied to the marking pads 24 on the tool 10. After selecting a starting position on the vertical surface, the tool 10 is held proximate to the vertical surface 30 at the starting position in a preferred vertical orientation as indicated by the level 17. The tool 10 is then pressed against the vertical surface 30 with sufficient pressure to cause the marking material to be transferred from the marking pads 24 to discrete points 32 on the surface 30. The tool is then repositioned directly above or below the first set of marked points 32, reoriented to the preferred vertical orientation as indicated by the level 17, and pressed against the surface 30 to mark a second set of points 32 on the surface 30. This process is continued until the marked points 32 outline a complete vertical stripe having a desired length. Lines 34 may be marked between the marked points 32 to define a stripe on the surface 30 as shown. The edges 14 of the tool 10 may be used as a straight edge to assist in marking lines 34. To mark a second vertical stripe on the surface 30, the tool is laterally repositioned a distance "a" from the previously marked stripe, and the process is repeated as described above. The graduated markings 11 on tool 10 can be used to measure the distance "a" between adjacent stripes. The process is continued until a desired number of spaced vertical stripes are marked on the surface 30.

In a second method of marking a series of spaced vertical stripes on a surface with tool 10, the tool 10 is positioned on the surface 30 in an initial starting position on the

surface 30. The tool 10 is oriented such that the level 17 indicates that the tool is in a preferred vertical orientation. Rather than using marking pads 24 for marking aligned sets of marked points 32 as described above, in this alternate method, a marking device such as a pencil is used to mark lines 34 directly on the surface 30. The vertical edges 14 of the tool 10 are used as straight edges to guide the marking device as the lines 34 are marked on the surface 30. Once an initial set of lines 34 is marked at the starting position, the tool 10 is progressively vertically repositioned and additional marked lines 34 are drawn until a complete vertical stripe has been marked on the surface 30. Additional stripes are marked on the surface by successively moving the tool laterally a distance "a" from an adjacent stripe, and repeating the marking process described above. The graduated markings 11 on tool 10 can be used to measure the horizontal distance "a" between adjacent stripes.

In the methods described above for marking a series of vertical stripes on a surface 30, the marked stripes have a width "b" that is substantially equal to the width of the tool 10 (see Fig. 3). As shown in Figure 4, the tool 10 can also be used to for marking a surface 30 with a series of vertical stripes having a width "c" that is different than the width of the tool 10. In this method, a first vertical line 35 is marked on surface 30. The first line 35 may be marked as a pair of marks 32 formed by a vertically aligned pair of the marking pads 24. Alternatively, line 35 may be drawn with a marking device such as a pencil guided by a straight edge 14 on the tool 10. The vertically oriented tool 10 is then moved laterally a desired distance "d" until the tool 10 is in position to mark a stripe having a narrow width "c". The substantially transparent plate 12 permits a user to view a previously marked spot 32 or a previously marked line 35 through the tool 10, thereby assisting with the lateral repositioning of the tool 10. The level 17 is used to ensure that the tool 10 is always substantially oriented in a preferred position during use. The graduated markings 11 along

the upper edge 15 of the tool 10 can be used to measure the distance "c" from the previously drawn line 35. Line 37 is then marked on surface 30 with a pair of marks 32 using a pair of vertically aligned marking pads 24, or with a line 37 drawn using a marking device such as a pencil guided by a straight edge 14 on the tool 10. In this manner, tool 10 can be used to
5 layout stripes that are both narrower and wider than the tool 10.

As shown in Figure 5, tool 10 can also be used to mark a series of spaced horizontal stripes on a surface 30. This method is similar to the methods described above for marking a series of vertical stripes with tool 10, but the tool 10 is used in a horizontal rather than a vertical orientation. For marking horizontal lines and stripes, the tool is oriented as shown in
10 Figure 5. The second level 18 is used to indicate when the tool 10 is in a substantially horizontal orientation. Each stripe is marked by progressively moving the tool 10 in a horizontal direction and incrementally marking sections of a stripe on the vertical surface, either with the marking pads 24 or with a marking device such as a pencil. The tool 10 is vertically repositioned to draw additional horizontal stripes on the surface 30 by the same
15 process. As described above with reference to vertical stripes, the tool 10 can be used to mark horizontal stripes that are narrower, wider, or the same width as the tool 10.

An embodiment of a tool 40 for marking a block or brick pattern on a substantially vertical surface is shown in Figure 6. The tool 40 includes a plate 42 having vertical edges 44 and horizontal edges 44 forming a rectangular outer shape. Preferably, the plate 42 is
20 constructed of a substantially transparent material. A handle 46 is provided on the outer face 49 of the tool 40. A level indicator 47 is provided on the tool 40 to indicate when the tool is in a preferred level orientation. Marking pads 48 may provided at the corners on an inner face of the tool 40 as shown. Center marks 43 may be provided at the midpoints of the

horizontal edges 45 as shown. Additional graduated measurement markings may be provided along at least one edge of the tool 40 (not shown).

Figure 7 illustrates a method of using the tool 40 to mark a repetitive block pattern on a substantially vertical surface 50. In this method, the level indicator 47 is used to verify that the tool 40 is in a preferred orientation as the tool 40 is used to mark a pattern. The tool 40 is progressively positioned on the surface 50 to mark a pattern as shown. The pattern can be marked using the marking pads 48 to mark points 52 on the surface 50. The marked points 52 are then connected with marked lines 54 to complete the pattern. Alternatively, a rectangular shape representing a single block can be marked directly on the surface 50 with a marking device such as a pencil. The rectangular outline of the tool 40 is directly traced on the surface 50. A row of blocks is marked by incrementally laterally moving the leveled tool 40 along the surface 40. Additional rows of blocks are marked in a similar manner. The center marks 43 can be used to stagger the block pattern between rows as shown.

A tool 60 for marking a repetitive diamond pattern on a substantially vertical surface is shown in Figure 8. The tool 60 includes plate 62 having an outer shape 64 forming a diamond. The tool 60 includes a handle 66 and a level indicator 67. Marking pads 68 may be provided on at the corners on the inner face of the tool 60 as shown. The tool 60 can be used to mark a repetitive diamond or tile pattern on a surface 70 as shown in Figure 9. When a spirit level is used as the level indicator 67, the tool is in a preferred level orientation when a bubble 76 is positioned at the center 77 of the spirit level as shown. The tool 60 can be used to mark a repetitive pattern on a surface in a method similar to that described above for other embodiments of the tool 10, 40. The marking pads 68 can be used to transfer a marking material to the surface 70 to mark discrete points 72 of the pattern, or the tool can be

used as a template to trace a diamond shape directly on the surface 70 with a marking device such as a pencil.

Figures 10a and 10b show an alternate embodiment 100 of a tool for marking a diamond pattern on a substantially vertical surface. In this embodiment, the plate 120 includes a first plate portion 102 and a second plate portion 104. The first and second plate portions 102, 104 mate at a seam 111 to form plate 120. A handle 106 includes a first handle portion 108, and a second handle portion 109. At least one connector 107 is provided to align and connect the plate portions 102, 104 to each other. In the embodiment shown, two dowels 107 are provided in first handle portion 108. The dowels engage mating holes 110 in the second handle portion 109. When the first and second plate portions 102, 104 are joined together at the seam 111 and the dowels 107 are engaged in the holes 110, the handle 106 can be gripped in the hand of a user, thereby preventing the plate portions 102, 104 from separating during use for marking a full diamond pattern on a surface. Either of the separated plate portions 102, 104 can be used individually, however, to mark a half-diamond pattern on a surface. At least one level indicator 112, 114 is provided on at least one of the plate portions 102, 104 to indicate when the tool 100 is in a level orientation during use. The separate plate portions 102, 104 are useful for marking portions of a staggered block pattern where the pattern intersects a corner, door, window, or the like. For example, as shown in Figure 9, plate portion 104 can be used to mark a half-diamond shape on a portion of a surface 70 that is adjacent to a vertical obstruction 130. Though the divisible tool 100 is shown having a diamond outer shape, the plate 120 can have any desired polygonal outer shape such as a rectangle, hexagon, octagon, star shape, or the like.

One or more marking tools or templates like those described above may be included as a portion of a faux painting kit. Such a kit may include instructional information for using

such a tool or template. The instructional information may be provided in a video format such as a videotape, compact disc (CD), or digital video disc (DVD), for example. In addition, such a kit may include one or more painting products. Such painting products may include, but are not limited to, paint, glaze material such as is commonly used in faux
5 painting, paint brushes, paint rollers, other paint applicators, marking materials such as chalk, masking tape, sponges, cheese cloth or other fabric material, and the like.

The above descriptions of various specific embodiments of the invention are for the purpose of illustration only, and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention thereto. A tool according to the invention can have any polygonal outer shape that can be used to
10 mark a repetitive geometric pattern on a substantially vertical surface. For example, a tool according to the invention may have a hexagonal or octagonal outer shape. In addition, other types of level indicators can be used other than spirit levels for indicating when a tool according to the invention is in a preferred leveled orientation. For example, electronic level indicators may be used in place of spirit levels. All such modifications are within the scope
15 of the invention, as will be apparent to a person of ordinary skill in the art from a reading of the appended claims.